THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) 15.3.1986, Indian Airlines had signned a purchase agreement with M|s. Airbus Industries France, for the purchase of 19 Airbus A-320 aircraft which are scheduled for delivery from April, 1989 onwards. Indian Airlines has also issued a Letter of intent to Airbus Industries, France, on the 8th of July 1988 for purchase of 12 additional Airbus A-320 aircraft. Proposal to convert the option into a firm order is under consideration of the Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Since adequate time is required for appraisal of the proposal by various agencies. it was found necessary to seek extension.

Second Bridge acress Hooghly in Calcutta

94 SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the progress of construction of the second bridge across the Hooghly in Calcutta is tardy;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the same; and

(c) by when the bridge is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (c) Second Hooghly Bridge under construction at Calcutta falls on a State Road and is, therefore, primarily the responsibility of the Government of West Bengal. There have been slippages in progress of work on account of delay in fabrication & erection of the components of the main bridge. Efforts are, however, being made by the State Government to make them up. The Bridge is now likely to be completed by December, 1990.

Airlinking of District headquarters

95. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to link the State capitals in the country with each district headquarters of respective States through Vayudoot; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what is the target date for its full implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. Government's approach is on these lines.

(b) The details, including the target date for the full implementation of this programme, cannot be indicated at this stage, because the same will depend upon resources position, availibility of aircraft etc.

Rail accidents

96. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of railway accidents and derailments have taken place during the last six months;

(b) if so, what are the details of the major accident which took place during the last six month, number of people killed, injured; and

(c) what are the main reasons found for these accidents?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Some accidents including derailments have taken

place during the last six months. Details are furnished in the enclosed statement.

Statement

During the period April-September 1988, four major accidents occurred on Indian Railways as per details below :—

Accidents	Casualty		Cause of accident
	Killed	Injured	
1. Collision between 323 Down Siddheswar Express and 101 Down Minar Express near Byculla station of Central Railway on 4-7-1988.	2	85	According to the provisional findings of the Commissioner of Railway Safety, the accident occurred due to failure of railway staff.
2. Derailment of 26 Down Bangalore Trivandrum Express between Sasthankotta and Perinad stations of Southern Railway on 8-7-1988.	105	201	According to the provisional findings of the Commissioner of Railway Safety, the accident occurred due to failure of railway staff.
3. Accident between 234 Down Fast Passenger and a tractor trailer at an unmanned level crrossing between Chomun Samod and Govindgarh Malikpur stations of Western Railway on 14-9-1988.	10	7	The accident occurred due to negligent driving by tractor driver.
4. Accident between 22 Down passenger train and a bus at an unmanned level crossing between Thakurganj and Taibpur stations of Northeast Frontier Railway on 27-9-1988.	22	43	The accident occurred due to to negligent driving by bus driver.

Committee to look into the poor maintenance of Boeing 737 aircraft

97. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IA Boeing 737 which crashed at Ahmedabad airport belonged to the first lot of 737s inducted by the IA in 1970;

(b) whether this airline is facing a major problem of shortage of aircrafts poor maintenance of an overworked and ageing fleet and poor quality of its cockpit crew in many cases; and

(c) if so, whether Government proposes to set up a highpowered expert Committee to look into it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Indian Airlines is at present facing a problem of shortage of aircraft but is in the process of acquiring leased aircraft in November '88 and additional A320 Airbus aircraft from April, 1989 onwards. As far as maintenance is concerned, all aircraft are maintained strictly aircraft in November 88 and additional manufacturers and duly approved by the Director General of Civil Aviation. Various maintenance checks are carried out at specified intervals and certified by appropriately licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers. The officials of the DGCA also carry out random checks to ensure that the stipulated requirements are adhe-